



**ROCKVILLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INC.
WORKFORCE EDUCATION COMMITTEE MINUTES**

January 14, 2021
3:00 PM – 4:00 PM
Via Zoom

ATTENDEES: Alexis Castillo, Jacki Davis, Kathryn Davis, Ed Harrington, Jennifer Hester, Kim Kelley, Carla Merritt, Catherine O'Brien, Cindy Rivarde

Dr. Kelley opened the meeting and mentioned that the notes from the December Roundtable had been distributed to the group. The members of the Task Force felt that the Mr. Cyr was an excellent facilitator and the panelists were strong and were able to speak to the many different aspects of the topic.

Discuss Steps for February 10th Roundtable (Mental Healthcare):

- ✚ The topic of self-care and mental health has become important for many businesses and industries.
- ✚ Panelists for February so far are:
 - Meredith “Merry” Campbell is a human resources attorney at Shulman Rogers. She works with clients and their obligations regarding COVID – keeping employees safe, can employees be required to get the vaccine, can people still work from home, etc.
 - Susan Webb is a psychologist from Suburban Hospital. She can address the issue of mental healthcare in the workplace.
 - Dr. Dewhurst and Dr. Bagshaw are Montgomery College faculty members but also have private practices. They can talk about current mental health issues for employees and can recommend ways to manage these issues as an employer.
 - Jennifer Hester recommended adding to the panel a pastor that works for Montgomery County Hospice.
- ✚ The role of moderator needs to be filled. This person should have an employer perspective and be able to ask the kind of questions that will be relevant to the audience.
 - Jenifer Hester suggested Monica Escalante, who works for Montgomery County Hospice, as the facilitator for the Mental Health Roundtable. (FEBRARY)
 - Cindy Rivarde suggested Andy Detwiler as a moderator.
 - Ed Harrington suggested Michael Gottlieb as a moderator. Mr. Gottlieb is an attorney and works in entrepreneurial law. Ed will see him this evening and see if he is interested and available for the March Roundtable.

- Jennifer Hester suggested Morgan Sullivan as moderator. Cindy mentioned he had just participated as a panelist at the December Roundtable. In his role at JLL he has worked during the pandemic on staff training and building modifications among other areas related to COVID relief.



Topics for the **Mental Healthcare** Roundtable can include:

- How to manage self-care for employees so they can be productive.
- How to deal with recent societal stressors.
- How can employers help their employees maintain their mental wellness?
- How can employers manage the stress and anxiety in their employees?
- What are the options available to employers in addressing these issues?
- How are employers and employees dealing with the loss of coworkers and of family members due to COVID?



Questions regarding **Mental Healthcare**:

- What type of support should an employer be providing?
- Is access to mental healthcare through insurance or EAP enough?
- What is the messaging and strategy for employees who have not yet returned to work but will return during 2021? What is the best way to frame this to reduce stress for employees returning to work?
- How do employers acknowledge the stress, fear, and apprehension in their workforce? These feelings are a result of the pandemic as well as the recent events at the Capitol in Washington.
- How can employers encourage, support, or enhance employee safety?
- What are the most important wellness areas for employers to invest in now?
- What does the future look like for mental healthcare? What services will be needed in the workplace in 2023?

Discuss Steps for potential March Roundtable (Legal Issues):



Options for Moderator are:

- Cindy Rivarde suggested Andy Detwiler as a moderator.
- Ed Harrington suggested Michael Gottlieb as a moderator. Mr. Gottlieb is an attorney and works in entrepreneurial law. Ed will see him this evening and see if he is interested and available for the March Roundtable.
- Jennifer Hester suggested Morgan Sullivan as moderator. He was a panelist at the December Roundtable. In his role at JLL he has worked during the pandemic on staff training and building modifications among other areas related to COVID relief.
- Cindy will reach out to Andy first. Mr. Gottlieb might be a better moderator for the March roundtable that is tentatively to be on legal issues.




Topics for the **Legal Issues** Roundtable can include:

- What happens when someone in the workplace gets sick? What is the legal responsibility of the employer?


- What happens when employees refuse to take the vaccine?

 Questions regarding **Legal Issues and Ramifications:**


- What does an employer do when an employee refuses to take the vaccine?
- How does an employer handle an employee who cannot take the vaccine due to religious or medical reasons? What are the implications for the employer?
- Can employers require employees to take the vaccine?
- What are the differences in requirements for schools and for businesses?
- How can small businesses afford the wellness support needed for employees?

 For the **Legal Issues** Roundtable, Jennifer suggested having panelists talk about COVID in general and the current state of the pandemic and where it is headed. She will contact some EMMES researchers and statisticians who have been working on the NIH clinical trials.

- Dr. Joe Sliman, EMMES Chief Medical Officer who is currently engaged with the EMMES COVID vaccine studies.
- Dr. Marion Newell (?), EMMES Chief Innovation Officer
- Michelle Greene is a researcher who has been leading the Remdisiver studies.


 Marketing ideas for the Roundtable:


- It's a Marathon, Not a Sprint: Addressing Mental Health Issues in the Workplace (FEBRUARY Roundtable)
- Turbulence on Re-entry: Legal Issues and the Vaccine (MARCH Roundtable)
- Turbulence on Re-entry: Employers and Employees and the Vaccine - Identifying Successful Strategies (MARCH Roundtable)


 How do we prepare the February Roundtable facilitator and panelists so they can focus their remarks on what that means from their perspective?

- A pre-meeting for the panelists and the moderator will need to be arranged. Cindy will schedule this once all the participants are confirmed.
- Bios will need to be provided by all the panelists and the moderator.

Next Steps for Finalizing February Roundtable

 Jennifer Hester will contact Monica Escalante regarding facilitating the February Roundtable.

 Jennifer will contact Pastor _____ regarding his availability to join the panel for the February Roundtable.

 Cindy will contact Andy Detwiler about begin a facilitator for the February Roundtable.

 Bios will be requested of the current panelists.

Adjourn